



PHOTOS BY CELESTE NOCHE

Jasmine Onya'e Kelley is a photographer and graphic designer who's created her own skin care line. "Constantly speaking to other creators here keeps me inspired," she says in her "Portland in Color" profile.

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industry was that there was simply a lack of artists of color.

"It made me really angry," Noche said. "There are a lot of people of color (PoC). Yes, we're not the (76 percent) of white people, but we exist, and we make incredible work."

Instead of keeping quiet, Noche imagined and enacted a series that not only supported artists of color with visibility and professional photographs for their own marketing but also doubled as a visual database for creatives. Noche's project came to fruition over the summer.

"My biggest intention is to share PoC stories because a lot of times, we don't share our narratives," Noche said. "We're often written about from a limited perspective. We're really 'othered' in the media, especially when white people write about cultures and backgrounds that they don't understand. It (means) a lot for me to be able to create a series that is dedicated to letting people of color see their own community."

"On the other spectrum, I really want white people to read this. I'm really tired of people saying (they) don't know PoC photographers to hire or don't know black artists. That's just not really an excuse."

Noche said agencies often don't realize their diversity efforts must go beyond looking to their own networks.

"If they're not doing the work to find those people and to make diversity a priority," Noche said, "what I can do from my end that's still reflective and valuable to the PoC community is to create a visual diary of people available for hire. I want people in positions of power –

especially in the media – to hire the artists that we feature. I would also love to get hired for projects."

Because her project is meant to highlight the diverse pool of creatives in Portland, Noche's definition for artists on the blog is also intentionally open.

"May (Cat) is a facilitator," Noche said. Although that's not a traditional art form, "there's definitely an art to be able to facilitate conversations about literally everything. There's so much creativity that goes into a lot of things, (and limiting that definition) can be really dismissive of people who express their creativity in different ways. Even if it's not a medium other people are familiar with, I want to be open to sharing those skills, as well."

Noche, who often photographs weddings, hopes that the project will lead to more storytelling-oriented work on her end. She also hopes to see more donations to support what she thinks could be a community resource for all Portlanders.

In the meantime, beneath each post of vivid images and questions about each person's preferred pronouns, media of choice and insight into what their experience has been with navigating Portland, are links to their personal Square Cash and Venmo payment apps.

"I don't have a lot of funds right now," Noche said, "but I am dedicated to compensating the artists featured because on top of the promotion that they're receiving, I want to be able to support them in continuing to do this art."

Noche said the success of her project depends not just on financial support but also on community connections.

"With more people reading about these experiences," she said, "I think there's a really big opportunity to learn from what these artists are sharing with us."



Celeste Noche



Saria Anafel Dy is a floral designer. In her "Portland in Color" profile, Dy says she gets inspired "by traveling or searching through the internet, learning about what other artists are doing in other countries."